

B. Kelley



**San Diego County
Taxpayers
Association**

Supporting Document No. 14

Targeting Waste • Promoting Efficiency

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January 21, 2009

Chair Richard Wright and Regional Board Members
San Diego Regional Water Quality Control Board
San Diego – Region 9
9174 Sky Park Court, Suite 100
San Diego, CA 92123

2009 JAN 23 PM 12:58
SAN DIEGO REGIONAL
WATER QUALITY
CONTROL BOARD

RE: Carlsbad Desalination Project, Resolution No. R9-2008-0039

Dear Chairman Wright and Members of the Board:

I am writing on behalf of the San Diego County Taxpayers Association, a non-profit, non-partisan organization, dedicated to promoting accountable, cost-effective and efficient government and opposing unnecessary new taxes and fees. For the past six decades, our organization has saved the region's taxpayers millions of dollars, as well as generated information to help educate the community-at-large.

Given the significant utility rate increases that have impacted San Diego's ratepayers in the past few years, we support the efforts made by the City of Carlsbad and Poseidon Resources to develop new potable water supplies – at no risk to taxpayers.

In evaluating the benefits this project provides to ratepayers, it's important to recognize that the estimated cost of public and private infrastructure projects across Southern California has risen astronomically due to increases in construction costs. It is clear that without the upfront financial investment by Poseidon Resources, Carlsbad's private sector partner, this project would have failed to reach this pivotal point in the approval process.

Furthermore, the long-term water purchase agreements Poseidon has secured with several public water agencies across the County ensures the cost of water to be equal to or less than the cost of imported water.

Not to be overlooked is Poseidon's commitment to create an energy efficient, environmentally-benign project. As part of their Marine Life Mitigation Plan, they have pledged to restore up to 55.4 acres of wetlands and to provide long-term maintenance of the Agua Hedionda Lagoon. This commitment alone represents significant financial value to the taxpayers in the form of avoided costs to local government for the lagoon's upkeep.

Finally, this project will generate jobs and critical revenues for local governments including \$2.4 million in property tax per year for the next 30 years, as well as \$10.4 million in sales tax during construction, and \$2.9 million per year thereafter.

At a time when ratepayers are facing mandatory conservation and higher water rates, the SDCTA requests your immediate approval of the project's Marine Life Mitigation Plan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lani Lutar', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Lani Lutar
President & CEO

cc:

David King, Vice Chairman
Eric Anderson, Board Member
Grant Destache, Board Member
George Loveland, Board Member
Wayne Rayfield, Board Member
Gary Thompson, Board Member
Kris Weber, Board Member
John Robertus, Executive Director
Catherine Hagan, Regional Board Attorney